

NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



TELEHEALTH TRUCK TO VISIT SIOUX FALLS VA

The Sioux Falls VA Health Care System encourages veterans to try out telehealth services on Monday, June 25, 2018, from 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. when a special truck visits the medical center to show what telehealth looks like in action.

Staff at the Sioux Falls VA currently provide health care to patients using technology such as computers and phones, but not all veterans and their families know what’s possible. The telehealth truck will be parked in the front parking lot, and everyone is invited to see what this technology is able to do.

“Sometimes computers and other technology can be intimidating, and perhaps more so when talking about health care. We’d like to ease some of those concerns by explaining how it works and improving everyone’s comfort level about using it,” said Jacqueline Cole, a registered nurse and the local telehealth nurse manager.

Demonstrations will help teach visitors how to use technology to get health care from their homes – or even their cars to increase awareness of how telehealth can reach veterans who live in remote or hard to reach places, which can save time and expense and patience.

Telehealth is currently used for over 12% of the 27,000 veteran patients the Sioux Falls VA serves.



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VA COMMITS \$17 MILLION TO EXPAND IPV PROGRAM

The U.S Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is taking action to address Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) by earmarking \$17 million in funds to support veterans in need.

The funds will strengthen IPV Assistance Programs in VA facilities nationwide.

“The VA recognizes that intimate partner violence is a health issue faced by many veterans and their families,” said Acting VA Secretary Peter O’Rourke. “We are giving careful attention to this program, ensuring it is integrated into clinical care and workplace safety. Both are important to the safety of veterans and VA employees who report experiencing violence.”

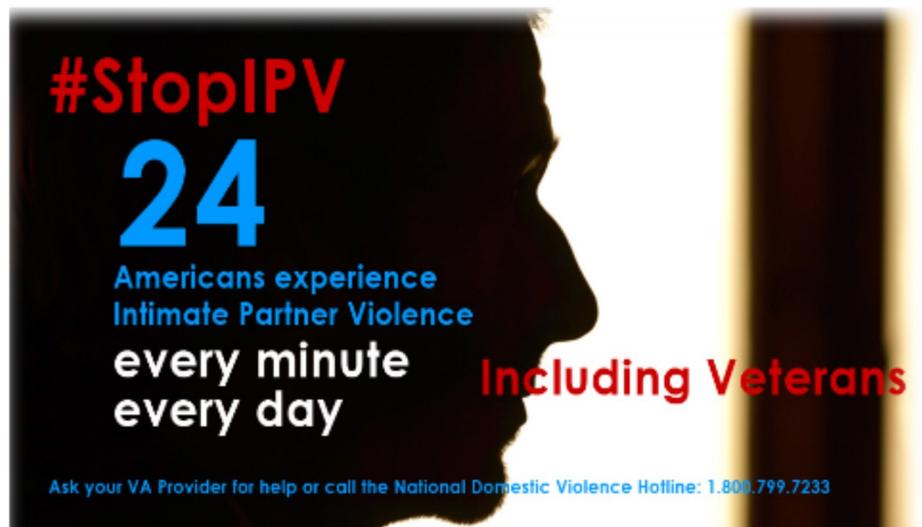
IPV affects millions of Americans. The term "intimate partner violence" describes physical, sexual or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples.

Awareness and identification of intimate partner violence among veterans has increased. Research suggests veterans may be at greater risk than their civilian counterparts, given the unique stressors posed by military life.

VA’s IPV Assistance Program focuses on the individual and works on developing a culture of safety. This holistic approach involves understanding, recognizing and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. The ultimate goals are to end violence, prevent further violence and promote healthy relationships.

The Veterans Health Administration launched the IPV Assistance Program in January 2014 and has since established IPV Assistance Program Coordinators at more than 115 VA facilities to offer assistance to veterans, their partners and VA staff. Program coordinators use resources from mental health, primary care, women’s health, veterans justice outreach and employee occupational health and assistance programs.

The IPV program also offers intervention through the VA and community partnerships that address housing, education and employment needs. This additional funding will allow the VA to expand the program to all VA medical centers and build greater awareness of IPV as a serious health issue.



D.O.T. TO FUND VETERANS PARKWAY PROJECT IN SIOUX FALLS

South Dakota has received word that the federal government will fund a new interchange connecting eastern Sioux Falls with the Interstate 90 freeway. The U.S. Department of Transportation on Wednesday announced a \$21 million Infrastructure Rebuilding America grant for the Veterans Parkway project, currently under construction in Sioux Falls.

“Today’s announcement is a big win for the quality of life and economic success of our growing community,” Mayor Paul TenHaken said in a statement after the grant award was announced. “The Veterans Parkway project is a crucial addition to our arterial roadway network. Once completed it will ease congestion, reduce drive times and enhance safety for drivers, plus open up new areas of growth for housing and commerce.”

The grant will cover a major portion of the \$55 million total project costs for one of the final phases of construction. The work will see the interchange of Interstate 90 at Exit 402 reconstructed to tie in with Veterans Parkway. A one-mile section of the rural, two-lane Timberline Road will be expanded to a six-lane divided highway and two railroad grade separations will also be reconstructed.

South Dakota Transportation Secretary Darin Berquist said the federal grant is a major help for South Dakota, which now has \$21 million freed up to do other projects. “This additional funding will not only help the Veterans Parkway project, but allow the department to move forward with an additional \$21 million in construction projects for (the year) that were not originally programmed,” he said.

Once finished, the state transportation department will turn the highway over to the city of Sioux Falls, at which point they will take over the operation and maintenance of Veterans Parkway.



BLACK HILLS VETERANS JOB FAIR

Connect with Local and National Employers!

June 27, 2018 ⬤ 11 am - 4 pm

Western Dakota Technical Institute
800 Mickelson Drive, Rapid City, SD 57703

*Save
the Date!*

REGISTER TODAY

www.bhvetsjobfair.com

Register for access to:

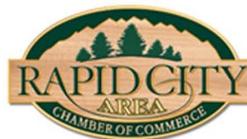
- ★ Early entry to Job Fair
- ★ Job Fair Preparation Class June 20, 2018
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.
Dept. of Labor, 2330 Maple Ave.
- ★ Resume review and feedback



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PRESIDENT SIGNS MISSION ACT

President Trump kept his promise to our Nation's veterans and has signed the historic VA MISSION Act into law on Wednesday of this week.

This law paves the way for a major overhaul of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and will expand access for veterans to VA-funded care in the private sector. The measure passed both chambers of Congress last month with overwhelming bipartisan support, but Congress hasn't paid for it yet.

Working out the details of exactly how and when that will happen is now up to agency officials tasked with drawing up regulations under the law. They will be reviewing wait times for VA appointments, quality of VA care and distance from a VA facility.

You can learn more about the Mission Act, at:

https://veterans.house.gov/uploadedfiles/va_mission_act_summary.pdf

SDDVA PARTICIPATE IN I.H.S. HEALTH FAIR

SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Bowen manned the SDDVA booth at the Indian Health Services Health Fair in Fort Thompson Thursday.

I.H.S. coordinated the event in an effort to get all health service providers and organizations together to assist Crow Creek Sioux Tribal members understand the services and benefits available to them and their families.

Bowen used this opportunity to explain the benefits and services available to veterans and their families, as well as update veterans on their claims.



HUTCHINSON COUNTY RECOGNIZES WWII VETERANS

Hutchinson County Veteran Service Officer Glenn Hartman presented commemorative medallions, symbolic of gratitude for their service and honoring their sacrifices, to five World War II veterans at the Avera Bormann Manor in Parkston.

Hartman presented the South Dakota medallions as part of a statewide effort led by South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Larry Zimmerman to recognize living World War II veterans.

The veterans who received the medallions were:

- Harold Koehn, who served in the United States Army from 1942 to 1946, with the rank of Sergeant.
- Ralph Palmer, who served in the United States Army from 1943 to 1946, with the rank of Sergeant.
- Clarence Thury, who served in the United States Army from 1946, to 1947, with the rank of Technician fourth grade.
- Clarence Tiede who served in the United States Army from 1942 to 1945, with the rank of Technical Sergeant.
- John Mechtenburg, who served in the Coast Guard from 1945 to 1946, with the rank of FLCR.

As time rolls on, the country is losing these veterans in high numbers. Sixteen million Americans served during WWII. According to United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 558,000 World War II veterans were alive in 2017, with 362 dying each day. This leant an urgency to Glenn Hartman's mission to present medallions to the living WWII veterans in Hutchinson country.

According to the National WWII Museum website, there were 1,652 living veterans in South Dakota in 2017. Hartman found 18 living veterans in Hutchinson county, with five in Parkston.

The veterans were honored at the presentation Hartman gave at Avera Bormann Manor as he presented them each with a medallion.

"It was quite an honor for me to issue this to the living veterans," Hartman said. "The medallion is one way to honor the Greatest Generation for their sacrifices and service and to tell our WWII veterans, 'thank you for your service.'"



John Mechtenberg receives his medallion from
Glenn Hartman

(Photos and story courtesy of Scott Ehler and Karen Adkins Runge at The Parkston Advance.)

SD C.A.P. CADET NAMED NATIONAL CADET OF THE YEAR

South Dakota Wing Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Joshua Klosterman of Brandon, a member of the Big Sioux Composite Squadron in Brookings, has been named the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Cadet of the Year for 2017. From over 30,000 CAP cadets he was selected as the most outstanding cadet in the nation!

Since joining Civil Air Patrol as a 12-year-old cadet he has been a consistently high achiever rapidly rising through the ranks and earning numerous awards, achievements and qualifications. While a cadet he qualified as a Ground Branch Director, a position normally held by an adult officer, on a CAP Emergency Services Incident Command Team. In addition, he qualified as a Ground Search and Rescue Team Leader and has participated in numerous real-world searches and in training events. He was a member of his squadron's award winning Big Sioux CyberPatriot computer cyber-defense team for several years. Joshua has served on several Cadet Advisory Councils, first representing his squadron to the wing, then the South Dakota Wing to the North Central Region and finally the North Central Region to National level council.

Joshua recently graduated from Dakota State University with a Master's Degree in Information Assurance and Computer Security. Last year, he received his Bachelor's Degree in Network and Security Administration. This August, he will begin working at the MITRE Corporation in Maryland doing cybersecurity research.

Joshua, who recently turned 21, has transitioned from a Civil Air Patrol cadet to senior member status as an officer with the rank of First Lieutenant. He plans to continue his service with the Civil Air Patrol by transferring from South Dakota Wing to one of the CAP squadrons in the Maryland Wing.

The South Dakota Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, with squadrons in Sioux Falls, Brookings, Rapid City, Pierre, Custer and Spearfish has approximately 300 members, seven light aircraft and 17 multi-purpose vehicles. These assets are available to federal, state and county governments, emergency responders and law enforcement agencies to perform search and rescue, homeland security, disaster relief, humanitarian assistance and counter-drug missions.

Civil Air Patrol, the longtime all-volunteer U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is the newest member of the Air Force's Total Force. In this role, CAP operates a fleet of 560 aircraft, performs about 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCC with saving an average of 80 lives annually. CAP's 58,000 members also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. CAP also plays a leading role in aerospace/STEM education, and its members serve as mentors to 24,000 young people participating in CAP's Cadet Programs. Visit www.GoCivilAirPatrol.com for more information.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jun 7-10—American Legion State Convention—Spearfish
 Jun 8—Marine Corps League State Convention—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre—10:00 am (CT)
 Jun 14-17—VFW State Convention—Sioux Falls
 Jun 27—Black Hills Veterans Job Fair—Western Dakota Tech (800 Mickelson Dr.) Rapid City 11:00 am—4:00 pm (MT)
 Jul 4—Independence Day (state offices closed)
 Jul 7—Veterans for Veterans Annual Poker Run—Mitchell Depot—1:00 pm (CT)
 Jul 11—South Dakota Veterans Council Meeting—PVA Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am (CT)
 Jul 12—Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Cemetery Grand Opening—Sisseton—11:00 am (CT)
 Jul 13 —VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Education Classroom—Fort Meade—10:00 am (MT)
 Jul 14—VVA SD State Council Third Quarter Meeting—Pierre Post 8 American Legion—11:00 am (CT)
 Jul 14-17—DAV National Convention—Reno, NV
 Jul 21-25—VFW National Convention—Kansas City, MO
 Jul 26—VABHHCS Veterans Town Hall—Post 8 American Legion—Pierre 11:00 am—4:00 pm (CT)
 Aug 20-24—SDDVA Benefits School—Ramkota—Pierre
 Aug 24-30—American Legion National Convention—Minneapolis, MN
 Sept 14—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—VFW Post 1273—Rapid City—10:00 am (MT)
 Oct 10—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—Soldiers and Sailors Building—Pierre—8:00 am (CT)
 Nov 16—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)



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